

IN THE CLAIMS:


1. (currently amended) A rechargeable lithium battery including a positive electrode, a negative electrode and a nonaqueous electrolyte, wherein an Li alloying metal is used as active material of at least one of said positive and negative electrodes and said ~~metal active material~~ Li alloying metal is covered with a thin film which is nonreactive with Li ions, permits passage of Li ion but does not have an Li ion conductivity.

2. (currently amended) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 1, wherein said thin film is a ~~hard-carbon~~ diamond-like carbon thin film.

3. (currently amended) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 2, wherein said ~~hard-carbon~~ diamond-like carbon thin film shows two peaks Id and Ig in the Raman scattering spectrum, around  $1400\text{ cm}^{-1}$  and  $1550\text{ cm}^{-1}$ , with a ratio (Id/Ig) in intensity of 0.5 to 3.0.

4. (original) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 1, wherein said thin film has a thickness of 50 to 1,000 nm.

5. (original) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 1, wherein said thin film has a volume resistivity of not exceeding  $10^{10} \Omega\cdot\text{cm}$ .

 6. (currently amended) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 1, wherein an interlayer is provided between said thin film and ~~metal active material~~ Li alloying metal.

7. (original) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 6, wherein said interlayer is formed from at least one selected from Si, Ti, Zr, Ge, Ru, Mo and W and their oxides, nitrides and carbides.

8. (currently amended) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 1, wherein said ~~metal active material~~ Li alloying metal is provided in a film form.

9. (currently amended) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 8, wherein said thin film is disposed on both sides of said ~~film form~~ film form ~~metal active material~~ Li alloying metal.

10. (currently amended) The rechargeable lithium battery of claim 1, wherein said ~~metal active material~~ Li alloying metal is at least one metal selected from Si, Ge, Sn, Al, In and Mg.

---